

Lang Admins Consider Schedule Changes

by RYANNE SALZANO, TUONGVI DIEP, LINDSEY GARRETSON

Lang students and faculty could lose their three-day weekends in 2019 if the college adopts a proposed bell schedule that includes Friday classes.

These changes aim to provide more flexibility in student's schedules, create common hours for student and group work to make better use of classroom space, administrators said.

Last semester, administrators told Lang faculty they're considering adopting Friday classes, but in a recent interview, Lang Dean Stephanie Browner said they're still mulling potential changes and trying to include relevant people in the process.

"There is a commitment to taking into consideration faculty and students. Indeed, the entire goal is to get a schedule that allows students to maximum access to courses and to take into consideration as many variables as possible," Browner said.

But how they'll include those variables and what the decision-making process will look like is still being ironed out, Browner said.

"Plans for creating a good process are just getting made," the dean said.

Browner hopes to convene a meeting with faculty and students, though she didn't say when that meeting would take place, as of the publication of this story.

Most seminar style classes at Eugene Lang College meet twice a week: either on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday.

The administration aims to enact these changes for the 2019-2020 school year, university official said through the office of Communications and Media Relations.

Administrators will be accepting feedback from The New School community throughout the next year, so they "can address concerns in advance and minimize any conflicts," the email said.

Space is one of the primary motivations for the change.

Empty classrooms in rented buildings has long been a problem for The New School. Space-related costs (including rent, real estate taxes and utilities) accounted for 23 percent of The New School's expenses for fiscal year 2017, according to a presen-

tation at a University Finances Town Hall on Oct. 27.

The university annually pays \$1 million in rent for each floor they use in 6 E. 16th St., Chief Operating Officer Tokumbo Shobowale said at the October town hall.

"There's a whole collaborative effort to think about how can we use our classrooms more efficiently. Make sure classrooms are full. Make sure that we use classrooms on Fridays. That may not be popular, but we're talking about \$1 million," Shobowale said.

The university has been working to rely less on rented spaces, purchasing a building in September 2016 for \$153 million. While the building can't be used for another 10 years due to long term leases, Shobowale said the purchase would save the university \$10 million a year once it's in use.

"The commitment to the board is that in the long term, it's going to be hugely beneficial, because we'll be able to move out of some rented space, save a ton of taxes and rent, because the rent in this area is going up dramatically," Shobowale said.

Students have responded to the proposed bell schedule change with confusion and frustration.

Jasper Skelton, an undeclared freshman, said it would be a "pretty huge burden" for students with long commutes.

"To ask commuter students who already have hour, hour and a half, two hour commutes to come to school earlier and stay later to me is ridiculous," he said.

Logan Magee, a freshman BA/BFA student at Lang and Parsons studying integrated design and non-fiction writing, did not understand the pushback on the schedule change.

"I don't get why people are upset. Students at Parsons aren't guaranteed a three-day weekend," Magee said.

Additional reporting by Jorge Romero